1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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Plate XI. The Bastions, Valletta.

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Plate XII. The Church and Piazza, Żabbar.

for wind breaks, covered forcing beds, crop supports, etc. Livestock harness is simple in type consisting of head harness and collar. Working bullocks, now rarely used, are also equipped with collars for traction but the guiding reins are attached to the horns. Country carts are unsprung, wooden frames resting directly on the metal axles. That the ruggedness of their construction is only equalled by the toughness of the draught animals is evinced by their presence on places such as Dingli Undercliff, or the cliffsides of the Wied il-Luq (Buskett).

The solidly built stone huts or *orfa* that are to be found on most holdings may be regarded as part of the farmers' 'equipment' rather than his habitation. The simplest and most numerous are simple one-roomed cubes, some five yards square, strongly constructed, usually of worked stone blocks with wood and *torba* roofs. These 'blockhouses', for such they appear, serve as storehouses for implements and crops, for guns and birdcatching equipment, as well as for shelter during the 'siesta' hours and bad weather. Their cost in construction labour, and the pride that does into the simple furnishing of what is the farmers 'den', as well as the deceptive appearance of dispersed settlement that they give, suggests that further investigation into their origins might prove valuable. In general terms, they seem to be a natural response to the marked concentration of settlement in the casals. They are far less numerous in the western region of more recent and dispersed settlement. The larger, two-roomed and two-storied types are used mainly as summer working residences, when a whole family may move out of its casal to the main holding.

These implements and types of equipment are one facet of the complex of traditional cultivation techniques - techniques based on the intense and continuous application of uncosted hand labour. A brief examination of the working characteristics of some of the implements is a necessary introduction to a discussion of general cultivation techniques.

The *mohriet* (Plate XIX) is used as an animal-drawn hoe rather than as a plough proper. It is light and can be carried by the cultivator along narrow field paths and across rugged terrain. Its negotiability is limited only by the ease of access demanded by the draught animals. The 'rotavator' (Plate XX) alone of modern mechanical implements can rival it in this respect. On coarse soils, often only a few inches deep, cross tilling by hoe or *ard* seems perfectly satisfactory for tilth making. A vertically applied tool such as the true spade cannot be utilised in such soils, while all but the simplest mouldboard ploughs are too clumsy for use in small terraced fields. Both *ard* and hoe are used in garden rather than field style and their only disadvantages lie in the slowness of the work performed. Here lies the especial advantage of the rotavator that can, under reasonable conditions, be used for tilling six *imgiegh* of land a day as compared with about two or three for the *ard* and one for the hoe. (Figures are necessarily approximate averages.)

Cultivation techniques and the farming landscapes which they have produced are now in a critical stage of development. For millennia, a slowly increasing population has been utilising the natural land resources more and more intensively and also supplementing them by artificial works. Until the early nineteenth century, social and tenurial obstructions to full land use on the one hand, and wealth derived from the overseas possessions of the Knights of Malta on the other, little affected the basic land hunger of the rural community. During the period of British occupation, however, externally derived income has brought with it more and more non-agricultural activity. Opportunities for non-farm work have increased and so has socio-economic dissatisfaction with arduous and limited rural life. The stage has now been reached at which land reclamation and land abandonment, intensification of effort and neglect, are proceeding simultaneously. An examination of those landscape features which are products of farming techniques suggests that this stage is now critical.

Land reclamation and the extension of the cultivable area are still going on. At several points on the Delimara peninsula, material is being carried from the cliff foot and from old huts and dwellings and spread over the existing thin and discontinuous soil cover. On this, sulla as a soil building leguminous crop

[see page 306 -- Analyst]

*159 156 461 626 517 493 make money, but he has little sympathy for the older people around him and they in their turn regard him as a social (as well as economic) rebel. He takes little part in the social life of the village. Work is his first concern and he is most annoyed when the priest, with whom he has "not been on speaking terms" since his return from Australia, forbids his working on Sundays. This includes even repair work on the machinery indoors. He knows well enough that were he to plow on Sundays or feats days he would be "publically ostracised and no villager would hire him and his plow". His relaxation is his motor-cycle on which he escapes at high speed from time to time along with others of his generation who "have eyes for the lights of Valletta rather than farming".

*159 156 593 Towards his own parents Ġanni's attitude is typical. He regards his father as belonging to the old generation of illiterate or semi-literate countryfolk, steeped in the conservatism of the past and the traditional. Father and son argue continuously over points of policy - with Ġanni tending to assume that his education and wider experience entitles him to something of a 'casting vote' in such arguments. Nevertheless the family tie is there and is strong enough for Ġanni to have an innate respect for his father despite the gulf in education and ideas. Thus Ġanni supported his father's scheme to plant some cotton even though he himself doubted the profitability of this move (1958).

*159 156 [583] Marriage in Malta, where the "evil dowry" ('data') system is maintained, holds little attraction for Ġanni. He observes that he cannot take a girl out on his motor-cycle without the older people of the village criticising him for not marrying her first. This and the whole social climate of village life in Malta of which it is part clashes with the ways he learned in Australia and with the ideas and beliefs which his education and his knowledge of the world outside the village of his birth have brought him.

Ġanni is primarily important to the village because he is staying there. He takes little part in village affairs, he does not "bother about festas", and he has few close [198] friends in his age group of farmers. But his ideas and the new methods and implements which he has brought to the village in face of considerable opposition and ridicule are a significant item in the changing scene of Maltese farming.

CASE XV

*159 402 407 Three brothers work together as a team. Their father works the land full-time and the brothers join him when their joint tractor-hire business is not claiming their attention. Their mechanical activities began some twenty-two years ago and now extend over more than a sixth of the area of Malta. They appear to have been among the first in the tractor

7: Busuttil I, Y-4, 5 (no date) 1894
EZ6 Malta EZ6

796 the Canons of the Cathedral then says mass and the ceremony is over.

At the conclusion of this procession there is a scene of general confusion throughout the whole village of Zeitun. Priests, friars, *fratelli*, cross and standard-bearers, men and women of all classes, especially country people, and of these unfailingly the most recently married couples—all in their best attire and with a grand display of jewels and gold (*)—are seen going to and fro, buying and eating sweetmeats
• [493] and cheese cakes. Then again hundreds of all sorts of vehicles, from His

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[675] [584] (*) Till lately, young women residing in the country insisted before they were married on its being particularly stipulated in the marriage contract, that their husbands should take them to Casal Zeitun on St. Gregory's day, to Valletta on St. John's day, and to Boschetto on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, on the 29th of June.

7: Busuttil I, Y-4, 5 (no date) 1894
EZ6 Malta EZ6

Grace's carriage to the commonest donkey cart, keep moving through the merry crowds, in search of their occupants. 796 [493]

Most of the people, however, who take part in this general procession, either stop at Zeitun, or proceed to Marsascirocco — a watering place at some distance from that village—where they spend the remainder of the day in merry making.

Round cheese cakes, *kassatât*, is the most common edible connected with this day, and from early morning, the whole day long, the shrill cries uttered by the innumerable vendors of the cakes may be heard throughout the village. 796 262 265

A few remarks about the origin of this procession will be interesting. 796 174

Many and various are the opinions as regards that origin.

7: Busuttil I, Y-4, 5 (no date) 1894
EZ6 Malta EZ6

belly, while with a thong in each hand they keep urging the gaily bedecked beasts to reach the goal first. 527 541

Soon after the races the merry parties set out on their return to their dwellings at quite a racing speed. Now you see every description of vehicle vying with its neighbour, and every driver urging with whip and voice to a reckless break-neck gallop his steed, adorned with two or more rows of tinkling bells hanging round the neck. 527 492 493

Flags and variegated silk handkerchiefs are streaming from the carriages, and ribbons from the horses' heads. Every cart is crammed, as only the Maltese can cram on anything on wheels. The sun-burnt country women are laughing and pelting the by-standers with apples, and waving tall green reeds and poplar branches in their 527

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

term by the numerous British Service men and women who have been stationed in or have passed through Malta, *sahha* has been admitted, in the form "saha," into the more recent editions of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* as an English word for "good-bye," with due acknowledgment of its Maltese origin. And perhaps "saha" is but the forerunner of others; for in its issue of the 5th January 1945 the London *Spectator* had this to say on the etymology of the word "spitchered," which occurs in one of the war books on Malta:

> The word clearly derives from the Maltese *spiċċa*, meaning "finished" or something similar. Naval opinion agrees with Air Force opinion on that. But naval opinion claims credit for embodying the word in the English language. And as naval opinion can point to its use as long ago as 1903, the Air Force does seem to be grounded or, indeed, spitchered on this particular point.

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In some parts of the Old World the visitor can select, according to his tastes, the century that he prefers. It is no exaggeration to say that in Malta he can choose the millennium and more than the millennium. If he is a palæontologist he may wander about the cave of Ghar Dalam and study *in situ* the remains of the elephants and hippopotami who left their bones there when the world was yet young, and of giant swans who sailed on lakes that have long since vanished. Advancing from these and from the Neanderthal Man, of whom traces may have been found in Malta, many thousands of years into the Stone Age, he will find in Malta and Gozo a series of megalithic and neolithic sanctuaries—Tarxien, the Hypogeum at Hal Saflieni, Ħaġiar Qim, Mnajdra, Ġgantija, to mention only the most important—unequalled in any other part of the world.

He will find other survivals of the Stone Age, of a different sort, in the cart-tracks which traverse many of the barren

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

rocky surfaces of the island, the tram-lines of neolithic man; and he will notice, if he is observant, that the dimensions of the flat two-wheeled carts which, with their gaily caparisoned little ponies or donkeys, are the traditional vehicle of the Maltese countryman of to-day correspond almost exactly with those of the carts of his neolithic predecessor, as deduced from the width of these ancient tracks. If he is interested in strange animals that still survive but must be a living link with hoary antiquity, he can study on the picturesque, uninhabited islet of Filfla, now used only as a target for gun practice, a remarkable lizard of the darkest green spotted with red (*Lacerta muralis* var. *filfolensis*), which occurs nowhere else in the world but on this tiny and diminishing spit of rock.

The dominant architectural notes of the Maltese Islands are megalithic and Baroque, and the gamut thus established can scarcely be called a narrow one. So far as works of art are concerned, the Museum in Valetta, housed before World War II in the Auberge d'Italie and since 1958 in that of Provence, contains a scientifically arranged exhibition of Stone Age culture unrivalled in any other country. This collection, whose most bizarre items are the astonishing fat female deities characteristic of Maltese neolithic sculpture, was organized in chronological sequence by the Museum's late learned Director, Sir Themistocles Zammit, who made a second international reputation in the field of Maltese archæology and excavation after having made an earlier one in medical research in connexion with undulant, or Malta, fever.

But the visitor is not obliged to study the activities of these remote peoples solely in museums. If he wishes to see how the distant forbears of the present population cultivated their land he has only to watch the Maltese farmer of to-day ploughing his field; if he is a student of cultural survivals he will note the eye of Osiris still painted on the bows of Malta's sturdy little schooners and characteristic "Gozo boats." If

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
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VALETTA: AUBERGE DE CASTILE

[See p. 60.]

MAIN ROOM OF THE AUBERGE DE PROVENCE (NOW THE MALTA NATIONAL MUSEUM) WHEN USED AS THE COFFEE-ROOM OF THE UNION CLUB

[See pp. 60 and 63.]

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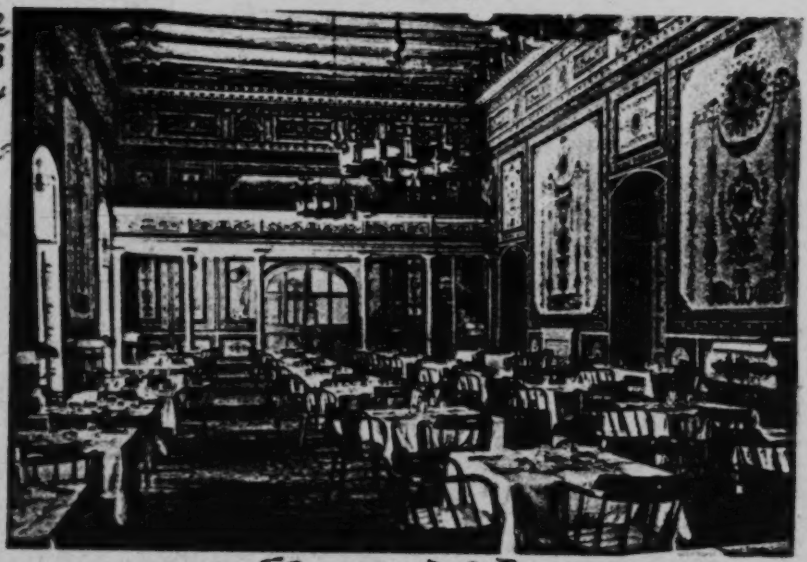

[facing P. 81]

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

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MAIN GATE INTO MDINA, WITH ARMS OF GRAND MASTER MANOEL DE VILHENA
[See p. 89.]

INSIDE OF SAME, WITH ARMS OF INGUANEZ FAMILY
[See p. 92.]

THE LATE BARONESS INGUANEZ ALIGHTING FROM HER OLD FAMILY CALÈCHE, MDINA

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[facing P. 104, (A)]